

**U.S. Department of Education - EDCAPS  
G5-Technical Review Form (New)**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/20/2018 12:45 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** NACA Inspired Schools Network (U282T180018)

**Reader #3:** \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance of the proposed project</b>		
1. Significance	35	34
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	28
<b>Quality of Management Plan/adequacy of resources</b>		
1. Management Plan/Resources	15	9
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	10	9
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	90
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Empowering Families/Individuals</b>		
1. Families/Individuals	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	5
<b>Total</b>	105	95

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - 84.282T-AP 2 - 1: 84.282T

Reader #3: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: NACA Inspired Schools Network (U282T180018)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance of the proposed project

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors (up to 35 points):

(1) The potential for generalizing from the findings or results of the proposed project;

(2) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies;

(3) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement; and

(4) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

#### Strengths:

The applicant provided a robust and compelling discussion of the obstacles charter schools in federally impacted, rural, and tribal areas face specific to facilities and facility financing (pgs. e31-e35), including: the lack of knowledge of school operators and the community in facility planning; the negative impacts poor facilities can have on teacher recruitment and retention, student enrollment, student health, student behavior, and learning outcomes; the poor status of current Bureau of Indian Education and public school facilities; and lack of capacity for tribal school administrators and educators in effectively managing facility projects.

Results of the proposed project would be incorporated in NISN's Fellowship program, which provides dedicated educators and administrators with an intensive 2- to 3-year leadership training program centered around NISN's community-based and culturally relevant education model (pg. e25). Therefore, Fellowship participants for many years to come would be able to use the results of this project whether they stayed within the NISN network or went to work elsewhere. In addition, this model could be generalized to other underserved and under-resourced populations throughout the nation, that also have challenges with having or accessing the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively plan and manage a facility that supports a culturally relevant education.

The proposed project has nine dissemination outputs that delivered through ten direct and indirect dissemination mechanisms, including, for example, assessment tools, planning templates, financing opportunities, technical advising and consulting services directory, and outreach and survey materials, all shared at the National Charter School Conference, on NISN's Online Resources Sharing Hub (webpage), and through reports to the U.S. Department of Education (pgs. e53-e54).

Given NISN serves over 1,000 Native American students and their families from federally recognized tribes in urban, rural, and reservation areas through a network of eight operational and twelve developing affiliated schools in four states (NM, OK, SD, CO), there is a high likelihood their proposed project will result in system change and improvement for the target populations of students who are Indians and students in communities served by rural local educational agencies (pg. e24).

Finally, the proposed project's activity of community stakeholder engagement sessions will not only build local capacity in school administrators and teachers to provide, improve, and expand services that address the needs of the target population, but will also build capacity in students, parents, and community members to consider and share what is most important to them in the form of facilities and spaces so they can take pride and ownership in the project and the facility

(pgs. e40, e43, and e52).

**Weaknesses:**

NISN, which was founded in 2014, provided limited information regarding the level of success it's had with this type of project before. As such, it's not clear if the proposed project represents best or evidence-based practices.

**Reader's Score: 34**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors (up to 30 points):**

**(1) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c));**

**(2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable;**

**(3) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition; and**

**(4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.**

**Strengths:**

NISN's proposed project demonstrates a strong rationale: "Schools, especially those serving Native American and other underserved populations in rural and tribal areas cannot effectively meet the demand of parents and communities for school choice and the best possible education for their children unless they have the capacity and supports they need to plan and finance facilities that meet the needs of their communities." (pg. e36).

The stated goals, objectives, and outcomes of NISN's proposed project are clearly specified and measurable (pg. e38-e51) and propose a detailed accounting to project partners (i.e., The Grant Plant, Grow New Mexico, and U.S. Department of Education).

The proposed project has the potential to provide the means for charter schools serving students who are Indians and students in communities served by rural educational agencies to provide a safe and appropriate facility or facility financing. Meeting with stakeholders to listen to their needs and respond by concretizing what is most important to them in the form of facilities and spaces is an exceptional approach to meeting the needs of the target population and priorities established for this competition (pgs. e40, e43, and e52).

**Weaknesses:**

While there are ten dissemination methods identified, it appears the information is mostly provided to NISN network schools and those who choose to visit the Online Resource Sharing Hub (pgs. e53-e54). As such, the information does not appear that it will be broadly disseminated or support further development or replication on a national level.

**Reader's Score: 28**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Management Plan/adequacy of resources**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors (up to 15 points):**

- (1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;**
- (2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project; and**
- (3) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.**

**Strengths:**

NISN's management plan to achieve the objectives of their proposed project on time and within budget is well-developed and clear. The detailed workplan (pgs. e57-e64) includes clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

The majority of costs appear reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project (pgs. e64 and e127-e137). However, there are a few costs that seem inconsistent with the project that will be discussed in the weaknesses.

The majority of proposed project partners (NISN, The Grant Plant, Grow New Mexico, and Oklahoma) provided a demonstrated commitment to the implementation and success of the project.

**Weaknesses:**

While NISN provided a detailed workplan (pgs. e57-e64), the application indicated "the first goal of the working group team will be to establish a three-year work plan..." making it unclear if the workplan included in the application is a first draft (that hasn't been reviewed or vetted by the work group) or a final draft that simply needs to be approved (or have minor tweaks).

It appears Daniel Ulibarri, NUSN Director of Operations and Facilities, will have his entire salary supplanted by grant funds (i.e., 0.7 FTE for programmatic support and 0.3 FTE for direct administrative support) (pg. e128).

The application narrative indicates The Grant Plant will provide membership in The Grant Collective to all participating schools in the project (pgs. e66-e67) leading the reader to understand this was an in-kind contribution from The Grant Plant. However, the budget narrative states The Grants Collective will provide memberships for seven New Mexico charter schools in operation and planning stages for a cost of \$500 annually (pg. e134). This is an expensive membership fee that benefits fewer than half of the proposed project participants – and only those in New Mexico for the duration of the grant period – making it potentially non-sustainable for participating schools in future years (based on financial information provided in the application narrative).

One of the proposed partners, Colorado, did not provide a demonstrated commitment to the implementation and success of the project.

**Reader's Score:**      **9**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the following factors (up to 10 points):**
  - (1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability;**
  - (2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator; and**

### **(3) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.**

#### **Strengths:**

The application indicates NISN commits to seeking qualified individuals of diverse backgrounds (pgs. e12 and e68-e69) and the diverse backgrounds of the current staff (75% Native American – pg. e68) support the likelihood the applicant would be able to employ persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented.

The qualifications of NISN's, The Grant Plant's, and Grow New Mexico's staffs are extensive (pgs. e70-e73 and e82-e108) and represent the relevant training and experience necessary to support successful project implementation and management. The project director, Mr. Ulibarri, has relevant and substantial experience management and systems analysis (pgs. e69 and e82-e84). Other key personnel, Ms. Bobroff (pg. e70), Mr. Brauer (pgs. e70-e71), Mr. Genné (pgs. e71-e72), and Ms. Hielkema (pg. e73) also have relevant training and experience for implementing a successful project.

#### **Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 10**

### **Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible (up to 10 points).**

#### **Strengths:**

The proposed project evaluation proposes to answer five evaluation questions, including a detailed evaluation matrix for answering evaluation questions 2 and 3 (pgs. e75-e77).

#### **Weaknesses:**

The answer to evaluation question 5 will not be obtained until after the grant period and there was no dissemination method for providing this important answer to a broad audience.

**Reader's Score: 9**

### **Priority Questions**

#### **Competitive Preference Priority - Empowering Families/Individuals**

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority--Empowering Families and Individuals To Choose a High-Quality Education That Meets Their Unique Needs (Up to 5 points)**

**Projects that are designed to address increasing access to educational choice for one or more of the following groups of children or students:**

- (i) Children or students with disabilities.**
- (ii) English learners.**
- (iii) Students who are Indians, as defined in section 6151 of the ESEA.**
- (iv) Children or students in communities served by rural local educational agencies.**

**Strengths:**

NACA Inspired School Network (NISN) will empower families and individuals, especially students who are Indians and students in communities served by rural local educational agencies, to choose a high-quality education that meets their unique needs by helping 15 charter schools serving Native American and other underserved student populations in federally impacted, rural, and tribal areas to address knowledge and capacity challenges in accessing and financing facilities in New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Colorado (pgs. e23-e25).

NISN will include families, individuals, and communities in the discussion and decision-making process so they can have a community-led and culturally relevant school design (pg. e30).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score:**      **5**

---

**Status:**               Submitted  
**Last Updated:**      08/20/2018 12:45 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/14/2018 07:28 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** NACA Inspired Schools Network (U282T180018)

**Reader #2:** \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance of the proposed project</b>		
1. Significance	35	34
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	28
<b>Quality of Management Plan/adequacy of resources</b>		
1. Management Plan/Resources	15	12
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	10	9
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	93
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Empowering Families/Individuals</b>		
1. Families/Individuals	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	5
<b>Total</b>	105	98



# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - 84.282T-AP 2 - 1: 84.282T

Reader #2: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: NACA Inspired Schools Network (U282T180018)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance of the proposed project

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors (up to 35 points):

(1) The potential for generalizing from the findings or results of the proposed project;

(2) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies;

(3) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement; and

(4) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

#### Strengths:

Generalizability: NACA has been recognized both within the state and nationally for being an exemplary school model for serving Native American students and worthy of replication. The parent organization and applicant for this grant, NISN, building on this model, and replicating it more widely within the state and surrounding states: Colorado, Oklahoma, South Dakota. The schools' graduation rate is well above the public schools in the nearby schools district, Albuquerque schools. Pages E27-28 and e38. Of note, this work has never been done before, and the products and tools developed from this project and lessons learned will be of interest to a national population of educators and agencies serving Native populations.

Dissemination: This application intends to develop facilities planning and financing tools, pilot them in 15 project schools, and then following fine tuning, disseminate at their annual conference, partner organizations, NISN's larger network of charter local and regional schools and Communities of Practice. They will also rely on their organization's partners, Nonprofit Finance Fund, the Tribal Education Departments, National Alliance, Teach for American and the Learning Alliance to disseminate to their audiences. The products will also become part of the Fellowship Curriculum and be made available on NISN's Online Resource Hub. Additionally, materials will be made available to state charter authorizing authorities, tribal governance partners and education departments. The grant partners will also be disseminators: Grow NM and Grant Plant.

System change: The applicant points out that Native American students have the lowest academic achievement and graduation rates of any student group in the country. The BIE has not maintained their schools on tribal lands, nor have the infrastructure to update and upgrade their existing facilities in a significant way. Part of this is due to the rural nature of the communities these schools serve, and the small enrollment numbers. Rural areas typically do not have access to the technical assistance and resources charter schools located in larger communities do. This project proposed to ensure the tools and knowledge are provided to the local communities so that they in turn can develop their own solutions for school facilities and financing. NISN has already vetted this grassroots model in their Fellows program, that interns local educators and school leaders so that they can then open new schools or transition BIE schools to updated, affordable, charter schools.

There will be immediate results in the 15 schools targeted by this grant as they pilot and use the products and tools, and consulting and technical assistance to further their facilities needs and goals locally. Because this project targets the Native American education landscape specifically, there is great potential for system change and improvement, starting

initially in New Mexico, Colorado and Oklahoma, but when the results are disseminated, hopefully nationally. It is important to note that NACA already has been recognized for innovation and is attracting the attention of educators nationally and internationally for a culturally responsive and highly successful education model. Page e34

**Build local capacity:** As noted above, the project has a unique approach of engaging community stakeholders to solve their own facilities challenges. This building local capacity is part of NISN's dissemination of what worked for NACA. A key strategy is building local capacity by a 2-3 year Fellowship program that educates educators and school leaders in how to open or re-purpose existing schools (such as BIE) to become exemplary and culturally responsive to the Native communities they serve. These educators and leaders are prepared to then open schools following successfully completing their fellowship. The products such as the funding guides will be designed to link local communities with those organization and individuals interested in or with a track record of funding their "kind" of community.

#### **Weaknesses:**

The applicant should also consider some of the national charter serving organizations and non-profits for dissemination and hosting of the tools and products. Indigenous populations are served throughout the United States and if the tools are as valuable as they portend to be, getting them into the hands of those who can most make a difference is critical.

**Reader's Score: 34**

#### **Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design**

**1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors (up to 30 points):**

**(1) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c));**

**(2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable;**

**(3) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition; and**

**(4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.**

#### **Strengths:**

**Rationale:** The applicant notes that schools serving Native American communities and under-served populations in rural and tribal areas do not have financial options for meeting the needs of their local school communities. This project is designed to provide the tools, technical assistance, and capacity building support to enable local communities to design and create facilities solutions because of this increased knowledge. The applicant sites surveys in Colorado and New Mexico that document the unmet facilities needs of charter schools in general in these two states.

**Goals, objective and outcomes:** Pages e38-e44 Detailed goals, objectives and outcomes are included. The Logic Model Page e45-e51 provides additional detail on 3-5 years and 5 years and beyond outcomes. Although this is not within the scope of this grant, it does indicate support for the sustainability of this project approach after the grant funding ends. Pages E75-78 outlines the metrics to be used as part of the external evaluation.

**Exceptional approach:** The project is unique in its approach of building local capacity for solving facility's needs. It is also innovative in its intent to serve Native American communities primarily, a community that is looking increasingly to charter schools to solve the persistent academic failures of native students and the lacking BIE infrastructure and support. Good article cited on nurturing community participation. Page e52

**Dissemination:** There is a chart provided on dissemination mechanisms and outputs.

**Weaknesses:**

No data was provided for Oklahoma, even though this state will also be a participant in the project. Page E37

Although this plan is detailed, see additional comments under evaluation on the inclusion of additional metrics that might provide deeper analysis of the project.

As noted above, the applicant should also utilize national organizations serving charter schools and providing financial support for dissemination and hosting of tools and products. The Resource Hub, although in existence and being used by NISM educators, is primarily described as a curriculum source. The tools being developed for this project do not fit the category of curriculum unless it is the Fellows program curriculum. Page E54

**Reader's Score: 28**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Management Plan/adequacy of resources**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors (up to 15 points):**

**(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;**

**(2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project; and**

**(3) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.**

**Strengths:**

Adequacy of management plan. The plan on pages e55-64 is detailed. The applicant plans to review the plan upon successful funding of this grant proposal to ensure all entities are knowledgeable of and understand their responsibilities, decision making, oversight and timelines and deliverables. Part of the reason for convening the team, is to ensure a strong foundation at the start of the grant with the hopes of building in continued collaboration past the term of the grant.

The additional of an AmeriCorps member is a strength. Page e56

Reasonable costs: The utilization of NISN staff to provide expertise to the project is notable in reducing the overall costs for areas such as Finance Director, Director of Operations and Facilities, Fellowship Director and Director Program Staff. E 128.

Partners: There are letters of commitment in the appendices from the two partners. The partners are highly experienced in working in their areas of contribution for this project. NISN, the lead applicant, also has an impressive track record of creating a highly recognized model, NACA, and then taking the model to scale to other communities and states. NISN's funding appears to be sound, with no doubt they will see the project through to completion. The partners have collaborated in the past so have a working relationship established. Lastly, they know the state and the education landscape, including tribal and government agencies. Page E64 and e127-137

## **Weaknesses:**

It is unclear when schools will be engaged? It appears January through March 2019 which seems late for initiating them. Page E58

The development of the facilities assessment tool is completed April and May 2019, again this seems late in getting the schools engaged and taking stock. As such, the schools are expected to complete their onsite needs assessments May-November 2019. I would think that this should be completed prior to the summer rather than into the second school year of the grant. Part of the tool development is based on the results of the schools' needs assessments. Page E58

The applicant lists working on the draft directory for advising and consulting services, state and public financing opportunities, both beginning June 2019 and being completed January -March 2021. This is a year and a half to complete this task. This may be realistic, but it seems the two partner organizations already have access to these and other resources that would speed up the compilation. This concern is also mirrored on page e62 where 2 years are allocated for the directory of private granting opportunities. These seem to be critical tools that the partner schools and communities will not have access to until the end of the grant period and yet they are applying for grants in year two and three of the grant.

The role and responsibilities of Programmatic Support Staff is unclear and especially as their responsibility is for working cross states. It appears they were document and promote equitable per pupil funding, as part of their responsibilities, and assist in dissemination.

It is unclear why the project evaluator needs to attend all site visits and trainings. Page E131 The nature of the evaluation metrics does not seem to justify the need for this person to be onsite to be able to crunch the numbers and provide the survey results, etc.

It is unclear who the policy consultant is and their role. Page e133

It is unclear why the cost of the architectural or engineering consultant services are so high. Page E135

It is unclear what the role and responsibilities will be for the community consultants, one in each state. Considering there are two schools in each of two states, and the remainder of the schools are in NM, this does not seem to track based on the responsibilities and number of schools.

There is no letter of support from a Colorado entity.

**Reader's Score: 12**

## **Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the following factors (up to 10 points):**
  - (1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability;**
  - (2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator; and**
  - (3) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.**

### **Strengths:**

The applicant cites their organizations ethnic makeup, including the staff at 75% NA and the Board, 67%. Project Director

Qualifications. Highly qualified and experience working in both NM and Texas. Page E69. Key Project Personnel: All well qualified and with the experience and track record to be successful with this project. Page E74

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses in this section.

**Reader's Score:** 10

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation**

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible (up to 10 points).**

**Strengths:**

The applicant includes a detailed spreadsheet of the evaluation matrix. Page e74-77.

Qualitative and quantitative measures are included to evaluate the different components of this proposal.

An external evaluator will be employed to provide the metrics and critical feedback on the final outcome of this proposal.

The applicant and their partners all have strong track records in developing evaluation components to grants and utilizing the results to inform future actions. The applicant and their partners have received significant grant awards in the past indicating they are well prepared for the requirements of this federal grant.

**Weaknesses:**

The evaluation question on page e74 are primarily "countable," quantitative metrics. It would be important for the applicant to consider some deeper questions, such as How are the products and tools being used rather than just that they are being used. Are there innovative uses and adaptations that would be important for the overall evaluation results?

How will the applicant know if a community's plan is successful, of high quality, innovative, realistic versus that a plan was developed? Page e75.

Would it make sense to use the other public charter schools as a comparison for some of the metrics? For example, how do the 15 school's facility solutions compare to those of other charter schools in the states? Are they equally or more successful in attracting the necessary funding as a result of the intensive one to one and onsite TA? Etc.

Is the evaluator responsible for ensuring the data collection is complete or for also analyzing the data.. I.E. page e 76 3.4.

**Reader's Score:** 9

**Priority Questions**

## Competitive Preference Priority - Empowering Families/Individuals

### 1. Competitive Preference Priority--Empowering Families and Individuals To Choose a High-Quality Education That Meets Their Unique Needs (Up to 5 points)

Projects that are designed to address increasing access to educational choice for one or more of the following groups of children or students:

- (i) Children or students with disabilities.
- (ii) English learners.
- (iii) Students who are Indians, as defined in section 6151 of the ESEA.
- (iv) Children or students in communities served by rural local educational agencies.

#### Strengths:

The applicant meets two of the Competitive Preference Priorities. The sponsoring organization and the grant application both target serving Native American communities solely. In addition, the sponsoring organization and the grant application will specifically serve schools and communities that are primarily rural including designing a host of resources that can be effective within these unique settings. Lastly, the applicant's project design has a unique component of mobilizing and engaging the community stakeholders in analyzing and designing their own solutions to their school facility needs. NISN and the applicant will introduce and vet materials with individuals enrolled in their Fellowship Model. These are school educators and leaders who enroll in a 2-3 year intensive training program to eventually successfully open or transform existing schools into "community designed culturally relevant schools serving indigenous populations.

Also of note, the two partner organizations have successful track records working with the communities this grant proposes to serve: Native American and other underserved students attending schools in federally impacted, rural and tribal areas of New Mexico, Colorado and Oklahoma. This is important because this maximizes the work that can be accomplished within this 3 year grant period.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were found in this area.

**Reader's Score:**      **5**

---

**Status:**               Submitted  
**Last Updated:**      08/14/2018 07:28 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/17/2018 06:04 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** NACA Inspired Schools Network (U282T180018)

**Reader #1:** \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance of the proposed project</b>		
1. Significance	35	34
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	28
<b>Quality of Management Plan/adequacy of resources</b>		
1. Management Plan/Resources	15	12
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	10	9
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	93
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Empowering Families/Individuals</b>		
1. Families/Individuals	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	5
<b>Total</b>	105	98

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - 84.282T-AP 2 - 1: 84.282T

Reader #1: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: NACA Inspired Schools Network (U282T180018)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance of the proposed project

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors (up to 35 points):

- (1) The potential for generalizing from the findings or results of the proposed project;
- (2) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies;
- (3) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement; and
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

#### Strengths:

The applicants have relevant information related to charters serving similar student populations as well as those in more urban areas, i.e. Albuquerque (e28). The data collected will be used to inform the content of the Fellowship Training program (e30). There will be a specific focus on developing school facilities on tribal lands (e32). They have also identified a "resource gap" for charter schools serving Native American students and thus, will work to close this gap using the project funds. (e34).

#### Weaknesses:

The annual conference in Albuquerque may not be the best platform for those in rural areas. Applicants need to consider other more non-traditional methods for dissemination of best practices

Reader's Score: 34

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors (up to 30 points):

- (1) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c));
- (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable;
- (3) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition; and
- (4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

#### Strengths:

The project design is grounded in research, as evidenced by their work with the Fellows program, as well as the partnerships with other charters and stakeholders in NM, CO, and OK (e36). They make a strong case that the adequate financing of facilities will enable more charters to serve Native American students (e36). The survey data indicates an interest in more charters but facilities continue to be a major barrier, which this project addresses (e37). The goals,



objectives, and performance measures are detailed and aligned (e42-43). The exceptional approach utilized is the community engagement/involvement (e52).

**Weaknesses:**

Data for Oklahoma is not included. Also, the resource hub is described as a place for curriculum dissemination, although this grant is focused on facilities issues; thus, it is not clear how curriculum sharing would be helpful. There are 10 dissemination methods listed but most of the description is related to website access (e53).

**Reader's Score:** 28

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Management Plan/adequacy of resources**

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors (up to 15 points):**

**(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;**

**(2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project; and**

**(3) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.**

**Strengths:**

NISN identifies specific individuals and their roles on the Working Group (e55). The Working Group consists of representation from their partners, including The Grant Plan and Grow New Mexico. The milestones, timeline, and roles are clearly defined (e57-e64). Also, the applicants have a track record of success in implementing multi-year, multi-million dollar grants (e66).

**Weaknesses:**

The Working Group may not have the capacity to perform their regular job responsibilities and meet the milestones and deadlines listed in the application. Reviewers are concerned that one of the first tasks is to actually create the work plan; it would be more effective if this plan were already determined in the application (e55). The Project Director role, who is also the Director of Operations for NSIN, will have 100% of his salary provided by the grant funds. This grant was meant to supplement, not supplant. There are community consultants listed in each state but one state only has 2 charter schools so this does not seem equitable.

**Reader's Score:** 12

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the following factors (up to 10 points):**

**(1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability;**

**(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator; and**

**(3) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.**

**Strengths:**

Applicants have identified a Project Director with a strong background in education in NM, including a scholarship program for low-income students and parent involvement efforts on the state level (e69). The staff has a commitment to hiring individuals from underrepresented groups; they have a staff of 75% Native American, a Board of 67% Native American, and their Fellows program is 100% Native Americans (e68). The key project personnel also have relevant training and experience.

**Weaknesses:**

NA

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible (up to 10 points).**

**Strengths:**

Evaluation questions are a mix of qualitative and quantitative (e74). The external evaluator has an expertise with federal online reporting systems (e78). The evaluation matrix is detailed and indicates what sources of data will roll up to the actual evaluation reports (e75-e78).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicants provide questions that focus on mostly countable quantitative metrics (e74). It is highly recommended to consider the qualitative outcome questions prior to the grant award so that both quantitative and qualitative data are collected in an equitable manner.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**Priority Questions****Competitive Preference Priority - Empowering Families/Individuals**

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority--Empowering Families and Individuals To Choose a High-Quality Education That Meets Their Unique Needs (Up to 5 points)**

**Projects that are designed to address increasing access to educational choice for one or more of the following groups of children or students:**

- (i) Children or students with disabilities.**
- (ii) English learners.**
- (iii) Students who are Indians, as defined in section 6151 of the ESEA.**
- (iv) Children or students in communities served by rural local educational agencies.**

**Strengths:**

The project focuses on schools serving Native Americans and other historically marginalized communities in rural, tribal, and under resourced areas (e18). The narrative also provides a detailed and comprehensive overview of the mission of NISN, which is to transform Indigenous education (e22).

**Weaknesses:**

NA

**Reader's Score:**     **5**

---

**Status:**           Submitted

**Last Updated:**    08/17/2018 06:04 PM